



United States Mission to the OSCE

In Response to the Uzbek Ambassador's Statement on the U.S. State Department's Religious Freedom Report

As delivered by Chargé d' Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 30, 2006

Mr. Chairman,

The United States has taken note of the statement by the Ambassador of Uzbekistan.

The U.S. State Department issued the report in September 2006. I quote from the report:

"There was a decline in the status of religious freedom during the period covered by this report. A number of minority religious groups, including congregations of a variety of Christian denominations, had difficulty satisfying the strict registration requirements set out by the law. As in previous years, Protestant groups with ethnic Uzbek members reported operating in a climate of harassment and fear. Law enforcement officials raided and harassed some registered groups, several of which were subsequently deregistered and closed. The Government continued its campaign against unauthorized Islamic groups suspected of extremist sentiments or activities."

I won't continue because the report is available for the public, it is also available on the internet. I would urge countries who are interested in this issue simply to refer to that report for further detail.

Thank you.